



## **Starting a Men's Team Ministry to the Widowed and Single Parents**

### **Part I: Introducing Your Church Leadership and Your Church to Men's Team Ministry**

#### **(Video Transcription)**

**Herb Reese**

#### **New Commandment Men's Ministries**

Hello and welcome to "Starting a Men's Team Ministry to the Widowed and Single Parents." My name is Herb Reese. I'm the President of New Commandment Men's Ministries. This is the first of six videos that we're providing for men who want to begin a men's team ministry in their church.

I'm excited that you have this desire to serve the widowed and single parents in your church using teams of men. You are reaping the benefits of twenty years of experience. I've been doing this for twenty years and then for the last fifteen years I've been helping churches around the nation and also around the world start men's team ministries.

This is a culmination of that effort. Over the next six months you're going to have the opportunity to watch these videos and learn the material and then take practical steps to implement it.

Let's begin with our first video, "Introducing Your Church Leadership and Your Church to Men's Team Ministry." There's a reason I've entitled it in that order, because we don't want to start talking about men's ministry all around the church before we talk to our church leadership. We want to introduce our church leadership first to the ministry before we start getting everyone else excited and then we find out that it's not going to fit into the leadership's plan for the church.

#### **Introducing Your Church Leadership to Men's Team Ministry**

The first thing we want to do, then, is talk to the church leadership and decide from there where we're going to go.

I want to talk about communicating with the appropriate staff person in your church. For smaller churches, that would normally be your pastor. If your church is larger, then perhaps you have a dedicated men's ministry director or volunteer. It's important for you to take these steps and apply them to the appropriate person in your church. When I talk about taking this ministry to your pastor and explaining it to him, I also mean other appropriate staff people as well.

Let's work through the steps of what it takes to introduce this ministry to the leadership in your church.

The first thing you need to do is **familiarize yourself with this ministry**. Hopefully, you've already watched the three introductory videos. You've downloaded the DVD. You've downloaded the workbook. Now after this video, watch the DVD with the workbook. Go through the workbook and become very familiar with the material. You don't have to know every single detail. But it would be very helpful for you to know where to go if your pastor has a question you can't answer. You'll know where to go to find the answer.

Then **summarize the material**. Long ago I learned that it is important for me to be able to state what we do in one sentence. Here's my sentence: "New Commandment Men's Ministries helps churches recruit, train, organize and deploy teams of men who permanently adopt the widowed and single parents in their church and community."

That's a long sentence. But what I want you to do is to make your own sentence that you're going to be able to remember, hopefully shorter than that, and one that you can share with your pastor. A suggested example is, "New Commandment Men's Ministries uses teams of men to serve widows and single parents on a regular basis." Just so you have the kernel of the ministry down pat in your own mind that makes it easy for you to share with someone else.

Then **think about someone in your church that you personally know who would benefit from this ministry**: a widow, a widower, maybe someone who is disabled. Know their name, know a little about their background. Think about how they might benefit from having a team of men showing up at their doorstep one Saturday morning a month for two hours. Tuck that thought away in the back of your mind.

Then I want to ask you to pray. **Pray about God's leading**, God's direction, for this ministry in your church. Is it God's will for your church to do this ministry? We are not here to tell your church what to do. We are here to provide an option for your church if the Lord is indeed leading your church to do this ministry. It is amazing to me how men go into their church and they find out that God has been working in the hearts of others in their church and burdening them to minister to the widowed and single parents in their church.

Pray about that and see how the Spirit of God is leading you and perhaps others in your church.

Then I also want to encourage you to **pray about the possibility of leading this ministry yourself**. All pastors have people coming to them with suggestions for ministries. Pastors know about all kinds of ministries. When someone comes to him or her and tells them about a great ministry, the first thing that comes to their mind is, "Am I going to have to lead this?"

Most pastors are over worked and, probably, underpaid. The last thing they need is one more responsibility. The first question that comes to their mind is if you would be willing to lead it. You need to be able to answer that question, yes or no. So you need to be praying about whether or not the Lord would have you lead this ministry.

You may not feel like you can. I want you to push the envelope and say yes to that question. However, you may really know that you can't. Perhaps, for example, you don't have the time. You've prayed and God has confirmed that in your heart. You're just going to present the ministry to the church and see what God is going to do with it.

That's fine. But I want to encourage you to offer your services to your pastor or church leadership in helping them find someone to lead the ministry. Just be aware that your pastor already has enough

responsibility on his hands. If someone else can lead this ministry, it will reduce the stress level on him because there will be a group of men in his church who are serving a very needy segment of the church and will take that responsibility off him.

Now take your phone, call your church office and **make an appointment with your pastor**. You can either meet with him in his office, invite him to lunch or to coffee. But when you make this appointment, tell him why you're meeting. I always appreciated when I was a pastor and someone called and made an appointment with me and told me why we were getting together. Because if they didn't tell me the reason, then I always wondered in the back of my mind if there was a problem: are they going to dump on me, was that the reason why we were getting together? So it's always nice to tell your pastor why you want to get together.

You've familiarized yourself with the material, you've boiled it all down into one sentence, you've got an illustration that you can share with your pastor, you've prayed about it, you've set up your appointment, now it's time to **meet with your pastor**.

Remember to relax when you go in and talk with your pastor: he's your friend. You're going to share something with him that may open all kinds of doors for people in your church. It's important for you to just relax and realize that your pastor knows that you are not some Bible scholar. That's just fine. Share with him your enthusiasm. But don't go in with the attitude that he has to do this or the church has to do this.

Go in with the attitude that here is something to consider. It's something that maybe your church might want to pray about and see whether God might have you do this. That is critical, because we do not want any church leadership to feel like they have to do something. Because they don't. They are the church leadership. They are the ones that God uses to lead the church.

Now that you're meeting with your pastor, it's time to share with your pastor your one sentence about men's team ministry. "Pastor, I just want to talk to you about men's team ministry. It's sponsored by New Commandment Men's Ministries. They use teams of men to serve widows and single parents on a regular basis." Very simple concept that you can share with your pastor and that you can remember.

Then share your example. "Pastor, I was thinking about Helen. She was widowed about a year ago. She's really struggling. I was thinking that this might be something that would help her. Can you imagine if Helen had a team showing up every month for two hours on a Saturday morning to do whatever needed to be done around her home, how encouraging that would be for her and it would meet real needs in her life. And I'm thinking that there are other widows and single parents in our church just like Helen who might also benefit from this."

You're giving your pastor a clear concept of what the ministry is and then illustrating it for him so that he can see immediately how this applies to the neediest people in your church.

Then, have your DVD and your workbook along with you and hand it to your pastor and tell him that is the basic training material for the ministry and he can take it and look it over and tell you what he thinks about it. You can also share a few more facts you've learned about the ministry as you've gone through the material, what has stuck out in your mind. Explain how the pastor can learn more himself at [NewCommandment.org](http://NewCommandment.org). You can even take along your laptop and show him the membership site. Whatever you feel comfortable doing, do that.

Then finish by telling your pastor that you appreciate his time and his consideration and then ask him to get back with you and let you know what he thinks. Just leave it at that. Let your pastor know that you are open to however the Lord leads him and the church in this matter.

Now that you've met with your pastor, **pray again**. Keep this matter in prayers and **think of a possible start time**. It doesn't have to be a specific date. Think in terms of three or four months in advance and have that time in your mind in case your pastor calls and says he thinks you should do this. When you get back to your pastor and, if he says yes to the ministry, then you can convey that right there on the spot. You can suggest the time to begin. Because if you don't do that, your church is going to take forever in deciding when and how to start the ministry. By already having a general suggested time in your mind, you can get the ball rolling.

But if your pastor says no, then I want to ask you to do something: accept that as God's will for your church. Realize that God has a unique and distinct plan for every church. It's important for your church to know that they're not being forced or coerced into something, but rather, they are seeking God's mind and heart. So if your church says no, then what I'd suggest that you simply ask permission to take someone with you and visit a widow or single mom on a regular basis. If you can just do that on an informal basis. Ask the pastor if he'd be okay with that.

Maybe by doing that, you will be able to set an example for the rest of the church. Perhaps two or three years down the road, as the church observes your faithfulness to one person in the church, and how valuable that is, perhaps you can become an example for the church to follow later on.

But whatever you do, always work in tandem with your pastor. Never force this on your pastor or church, and never respond negatively if the church says no. That is extremely important.

### **Introducing Your Church to Men's Team Ministry**

If you've visited your pastor and you've gotten the green light to begin, what are some concepts that you need to be thinking about getting across to the rest of the church?

Here are the important concepts you need to communicate to your church:

- **A basic understanding of the men's team ministry model.** We're going to recruit men, form them into teams of four. Each team is permanently assigned to a widow, widower or single parent. Men donate three hours of time, one Saturday morning a month. On that Saturday, the teams will be meeting for one hour of prayer and bible study. Then they will split up and work around the home of their care receiver for two hours. Every month they will return to the same care receiver for years long service.
- **Why this ministry is needed.** Explain that you have people in your church that you're not spending a lot of time or resources on that have real needs. These are your widows, single parents, fatherless children and you're not doing a very good job meeting those needs. This ministry is a simple way for the church to address some real needs within your congregation.
- **The difference between project ministry and relational ministry.** It's extremely important for your church to understand this difference. Many churches do project ministries with their widows and single parents. They inventory the skills of their men. They find out who the plumbers are,

who the electricians are, who the carpenters are. Then when that widow or single mom has a need, they send over the plumber, the electrician or the carpenter. That's project ministry. As we talked about in the original intro video series, widows and single parents need far more than just project ministry. They need relational ministry because that's what they've lost. What this ministry is doing is filling that vacuum in their lives. So have this ready to explain because many people in your congregation are going to misunderstand the nature of what you're trying and they're going to think that you're doing a project ministry instead of a relational ministry.

- **The background of New Commandment Men's Ministries.** Share that it's been around for over fifteen years, over 900 churches are doing this ministry throughout the United States and around the world, things of that nature. People are going to wonder who Herb Reese is. You can learn this material at [NewCommandment.org](http://NewCommandment.org) and clicking on the "About" tab. Just go onto that tab and it will give you this background on New Commandment.
- **Who is going to lead the ministry.** This needs to be in place before you present the ministry to the congregation.
- **How much it will cost.** For most churches it cost less than one hundred dollars to begin. It's ridiculous how little it costs. On average, it costs New Commandment about one hundred dollars to help a church begin this ministry.

Let's think about the checklist that is on the website. Here's what you need to be thinking about doing after you watch this video.

- ✓ Watch the three videos in the "Mobilize Your Men to Meet Needs" series
- ✓ Watch the orientation DVD [download it from the website] with the workbook
- ✓ Set up an appointment with your pastor
- ✓ Meet with your pastor
- ✓ Give him the orientation DVD and workbook
- ✓ Get approval from your church leadership

Very simple. This is not rocket science. Our goal is for an average ordinary guy in the church with no special ministerial training to be able to take this ministry to his church. Present it to his church and get an up and running men's team ministry going.

You can do this. I have seen this happen hundreds of times, where guys get excited about men's team ministry, they take this material back to their church and, sure enough, they get this ministry going in their church. And God uses them in a very dramatic and amazing way to establish men's team ministry in their church.

Pray about this. Do the background work. Contact your pastor. Meet with your pastor. Share the material with him. Then get your pastor's approval. Then communicate the ministry to your church.

Feel free to call me or text me with any questions at 303-880-8839 or email me at [herbreese@yahoo.com](mailto:herbreese@yahoo.com). I will be more than happy to talk with you about what is the best approach to starting a men's team ministry in your church.

